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GEOLOGY.

ANCIENT REPTILES OF THE CONNECTICUT VALLEY. — Professor Cope has noticed in the "American Journal of Science," the bones of the *Megadactylus polyzelus* of Hitchcock found at Springfield, Mass., and infers that they "demonstrate the former existence in the region in question, of a typical form of the suborder, or order *Symphypoda*, and one nearer the birds than any other hitherto found in America." "That animals of this genus made some of the tracks similar to those of birds in the red sandstones of the valley of the Connecticut there can be no doubt," and the author adds that there is abundant reason that they progressed by leaps.

THE RATE OF GEOLOGICAL CHANGE. — Mr. H. M. Jenkins writes on the rate of geological change, in the "Quarterly Journal of Science," and comes to the conclusion that

"Whether we measure the relative lapse of time occupied by the successive events of geological history by the known facts of the accumulation of deposits, or by the comparative changes which have occurred in the life of successive periods, we are led equally to infer that the *rate of geological change* has been more rapid in the latter than in the earlier geological periods, and that that rate has increased progressively from the earliest to the latest times."

MICROSCOPY.

AIR-TIGHT SPECIMENS. — When shall we cease to suffer from the directions sometimes given to mount dry specimens in a cell of pasteboard or paper, fastening the glass cover down by "a little gum" or "paste?" Of course dust or moisture soon accumulates in the cells, or fungoid vegetation grows until it becomes a beautiful and conspicuous specimen; but in any case the original object is tolerably certain to be marred or ruined. I not unfrequently see collections of specimens, by popular makers, which have perished in this manner. Lately I lost in this way a very choice specimen prepared by one of the best European makers, whose work is usually faultless; and still later, having occasion to remount a group of diatoms which had been bought at a considerable price, I found the thin glass-cover supported at its four corners by little pieces of pasteboard, and fastened down by pasting over its edges the handsome paper cover of the slide. I have not yet seen any of Bicknell's beautiful specimens prepared in this slovenly manner, but scarcely any maker seems to be entirely exempt. I know of no cure for this state of things except for microscopists to refuse to buy any specimens, except those mounted in balsam, which are on paper-covered slides. Working microscopists can, and often do, preserve dry objects in cells of paper and pasteboard, an arrangement which is both convenient and economical; but such preparations should always be carefully protected by Brunswick black or some other impervious varnish. — R. H. W.